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THE STORY OF A VAST EXPLOSION.

THE greatest physical convulsion of recent times occurred on the morning of the 27th of August last year, the scene of the catastrophe being a small island in the Sunda Straits, which separate Sumatra and Java. It is a region which there is much reason to regard as one of the intensest foci of volcanic activity on the earth's surface. The main facts connected with this event, although slow in coming to hand, are now fairly within the records of science. Krakatoa, the volcanic island which a year or two ago was seven miles long by five broad, is about thirty miles from the Java coast. When surveyed in 1868-69, the island was found to be clothed from base to summit with a luxuriant growth of forest and tropical vegetation, but uninhabited. A few weeks prior to the eruption, the volcano, which had been dormant for two centuries, gave signs of an awakening. On the 20th of May several shocks, accompanied by loud explosions and hollow reverberations, startled the inhabitants of the towns of Batavia and Buitenzorg, about ninety miles distant.* These disturbances continued for the next three months with more or less activity. On the 11th and 18th of August the energy of the volcano increased, and there were symptoms of a crisis. On the 26th and the night following, several eruptions took place, until the climax was reached on the following morning. The submarine base of the mountain then seems, according to all available evidence, to have literally 'caved in.' This was apparently accompanied by an influx of the sea into the molten interior, the instantaneous development of superheated steam, and then an explosion which, for its colossal energy, is unparalleled in the annals of volcanic outbreaks.

The enormous power of this eruption can only be adequately understood by its effects; these we now briefly summarise. The explosion itself,

according to Dr Verbeek, one of the Dutch Commission appointed to investigate the nature and results of this catastrophe, caused the north part of the island to be blown away, and to fall eight miles to the north, forming what is now named Steer's Island. Moreover, the north-east portion of the island of Krakatoa was also hurled into the air, passed over Lang Island, and fell at a distance of seven miles, forming what is now known as Calmeyer Island. In proof of this, we have the fact elicited by the newly made marine survey of the Straits, that '*the bottom surrounding these new islands has not risen.*' This would have been the case had they been upheaved in the usual way. Not only so, but the bottom round these new islands shows a slightly *increased depth* in the direction of the submarine pit, nearly one thousand feet deep, which now marks the place the peak of Krakatoa occupied prior to the convulsion. But out of the midst of this deep depression there rises 'like a gigantic club' a remarkable column of rock of an area not more than thirty-three square feet, which projects sixteen feet above the surface of the sea. The southern part is all that is now left of the island of Krakatoa, and this fragment on its north side is now bounded by a magnificent precipitous cliff more than two thousand five hundred feet high. It has been thought by some, however, that the first portion of the island was blown away on the evening of August 26th, and that on the following morning the larger mass, answering to Calmeyer Island, was shot out by an effort still more titanic.

The shock of the explosion was felt at a distance of four thousand miles, being equal to an area of one-sixth of the earth's surface—that is, at Burmah, Ceylon and the Andaman Islands to the north-west, in some parts of India, at Saigon and Manila to the north, at Dorey in the Geelvink Bay (New Guinea) to the east, and throughout Northern Australia to the south-west. Lloyd's agents at Batavia, in Java, stated that on the eve of this vast explosion, the detonations

*The eruption of May was noticed in a previous article (Nov. 24, 1883).

'grew louder, till in the early morning the reports and concussions were simply deafening, not to say alarming.' So violent were the air-waves, due to this cause, that walls were rent by them at a distance of five hundred miles, and so great the volume of smoke and ashes, that Batavia, eighty miles off, was shrouded in complete darkness for two hours. Nearly four months after the eruption, masses of floating pumice, each several acres in extent, were seen in the Straits of Sunda.

Paradoxical as it appears, the sound was sometimes better heard in distant places than in those nearer the seat of disturbance. This singular effect has been thus explained—assuming, for example, the presence of a thick cloud of ashes between Krakatoa and Anjer, this would act on the sound-waves like a thick soft cushion; along and above such an ash-cloud the sound would be very easily propelled to more remote places, for instance, Batavia; whereas at Anjer, close behind the ash-cloud, no sounds, or only faint ones, would be heard. Other explanations seem to be less probable, though not impossible.

Dr Verbeek states that within a circle of nine and a-half miles' radius (fifteen kilometres) from the mountain, the layers of volcanic ash cover the ground to a depth of from sixty-five to one hundred and thirty feet, and at the back of the island the thickness of the ash-mountains is in some places even from one hundred and ninety-five to two hundred and sixty feet, and that the matter so projected extends over a known area of seven hundred and fifty thousand square kilometres (285,170 square miles), or a space larger than the German Empire with the Netherlands and Belgium, including Denmark and Iceland, or nearly twenty-one times the size of the Netherlands. Moreover, he calculates that the quantity of solid substance ejected by the volcano was eighteen cubic kilometres, or 4·14 cubic miles. To give some idea of the enormous volume this represents, we may take the following illustration: the largest of the Egyptian pyramids has upwards of eighty-two millions of cubic feet of masonry; it would therefore take about seven thousand three hundred and sixty of such structures to equal the bulk of matter thrown out by this eruption. Some of this matter was found to contain smooth round balls from five-eighths to two and a-quarter inches in diameter, and composed of fifty-five per cent. of carbonate of lime.

As may well be imagined, the final outburst by its awful energy gave rise to a succession of air-waves. These we now know went round the earth more than once, and recorded themselves on the registering barometers or barograms at the Mauritius, Berlin, Rome, St Petersburg, Valencia, Coimbra (Portugal), and other far-distant places. At some points, as many as seven such disturbances were noted; other instruments not so sensitive gave evidence of five, by which time the wave had pretty well spent itself.

Having collected the observations made at all the chief meteorological stations, General Strachey recently read a paper before the Royal Society which, in his opinion, conclusively shows that an immense air-wave started from Krakatoa at about thirty minutes past nine A.M. on August 27th. Spreading from this common centre, the wave went three and a-quarter times round the globe,

and those parts of it which had travelled in opposite directions passed through one another 'somewhere in the antipodes of Java.' The velocity of the aerial undulations which travelled from east to west was calculated at six hundred and seventy-four miles per hour, those moving in the reverse direction at seven hundred and six miles per hour, or nearly the velocity of sound.

But another effect of the eruption was a series of 'tidal waves,' so called—although the term is objected to because not strictly scientific—which, like the air-wave, passed round the world. Whether this was synchronous with the final explosion, it is not possible to say. The highest of these seismic sea-waves, which was over one hundred feet high, swept the shores on either side of the Straits, and wrought terrible destruction to life and property. More than thirty-five thousand persons perished through it; the greater part of the district of North Bantam was destroyed, the towns of Anjer, Merak, Tjerin-gin, and others being overwhelmed.

The initial movement of this destructive agent was undoubtedly of the nature of a negative wave; but the best testimony to this is lost, since those who witnessed it were its victims. The sudden subsidence of so large an area of the sea-bottom in the Straits caused the sea to recede from the neighbouring shores. This negative wave was, however, seen by Captain Ferrat from his vessel, as she lay at anchor at Port Louis. He states that towards two P.M. he saw the water in the harbour roll back and suddenly fall four or five feet; and that, a quarter of an hour afterwards, the sea returned with great violence to its former level, causing his own and other vessels to roll terribly. The best witness of this remarkable phenomenon, however, is Captain Watson, of the British ship *Charles Ball*. His vessel was actually within the Straits, and he states that he and his helmsman 'saw a wave rush right on to Button Island, apparently sweeping right over the south part, and rising half-way up to the north and east sides fifty or sixty feet, and then continuing on to the Java shore. This was evidently a wave of translation and not of progression, for it was not felt at the ship.' This latter movement, beyond question, must have coincided with the great 'tidal wave' above mentioned, and which was felt at Aden, on the Ceylon coast, Port Blair, Nagapatam, Port Elizabeth, Kurra-chee, Bombay, and half-way up to Calcutta on the Hooghly, the north-west coast of Australia, Honolulu, Kadiak in Alaska, San Ceato near San Francisco, and the east coast of New Zealand.

In this as in most other cases of volcanic disturbance, electrical phenomena were observed. One vessel in particular, while passing through the Sunda Straits, exhibited 'balls of fire' at her masthead and at the extremities of her yardarms. Further, it was noticed at the Oriental Telephone Station, Singapore, a place five hundred miles from Krakatoa, that on raising the receiving instrument to the ears, a perfect roar as of a waterfall was heard; and by shouting at the top of one's voice, the clerk at the other end of the wire was able just to hear something like articulation, but not a single sentence could be understood. On the line to Ishore, which includes a submarine cable about a mile long, reports like pistol-shots were heard. These noises were

considered due to a disturbance of the earth's magnetic field, caused by the explosion, and reacting on the wires of the telephone.

We have now to refer to what has been a much debated question. From about September to the beginning of the present year, remarkable coronal appearances and sunglows were noticed in different parts of the world, and especially the somewhat rare phenomena of red, green, and blue suns. Observers such as Norman Lockyer, Dr Meldrum, and Helmholtz maintained that the phenomena were due to volcanic dust at a great altitude; others, and notably meteorologists, rejected this hypothesis, and urged that the coloured suns were due to unusually favourable atmospheric conditions, such colours being probably due to the refraction and reflection of light by watery vapours. But the theory that volcanic dust caused these appearances is fast gaining ground, if it be not already an incontrovertible fact. The spectroscope has shown that dust of almost microscopic fineness floating in the air caused the sun to appear red. Such dust has already fallen, and the microscope reveals the existence in it of salt particles. This, then, is fairly conclusive evidence of the volcanic origin of such dust. That ash particles were actually carried very far in the upper air-currents, has already appeared from snow which fell in Spain and rain in Holland, in which the *same components* were found as in the Krakatoa ashes. Dr Verbeek estimates that the height to which this fine matter was projected 'may very well have reached' forty-five to sixty thousand feet.

In a letter addressed to the *Midland Naturalist* by Mr Clement Wragge, of Torrens Observatory, Adelaide, South Australia, and dated July 17, 1884, the writer remarks that recently, when there were magnificent sunsets, he obtained 'a perfectly sharp, clean spectrum without a trace of vapour-bands.' And further, he is strongly of opinion that the Krakatoa eruption is the primary cause of these wondrous pictures in the Kosmos.

There can now be little doubt but that the green and blue suns and exceptional sunsets observed in Europe, India, Africa, North and South America, Japan, and Australia, were due to the Krakatoa eruption. The enormous volume of volcanic dust and steam shot up into the higher atmospheric zones by this convulsion are adequate to furnish the chromatic effects above mentioned.

But we have better evidence still: these peculiar solar effects followed a tolerably straight course to one which was in fact chiefly confined to a narrow belt near the equator; the data now collected show that on the second day after the eruption they appeared on the east coast of Africa, on the third day on the Gold Coast, at Trinidad on the sixth, and at Honolulu the ninth day. Finally, in a paper read by Dr Douglas Archibald at the late British Association meeting at Montreal, it was stated that 'observations showed that the dates of the sunglows began earlier in Java, then apparently spread gradually away, the dust being so high as to be in the upper currents, of which we know little. These sunset glows were not seen before the eruption. . . . The dust appeared to have travelled at a uniform rate, over two thousand miles daily.'

'The topic,' says Mr S. E. Bishop, writing from Honolulu, 'is an endless one. Many ask what is the cause of frequent revivals of the red glows, such as the very fine one of August 19. It seems merely to show an irregular distribution of the vast clouds of thin Krakatoa haze still lingering in the upper atmosphere. They drift about, giving us sometimes more, sometimes less, of their presence. It is also not unlikely that in varying hygrometric conditions the minute dust-particles become nuclei for ice crystals of varying size. This would greatly vary their reflecting power, and accords with some observations of Mr C. J. Lyons, showing that the amount of red glow varies according to the prevalence of certain winds.' Further facts are coming to hand respecting this great natural convulsion.

BY MEAD AND STREAM.

CHAPTER IV.—SWEET ARE THE USES OF ADVERSITY.

Soon after reading Mr Shield's letter, Madge walked to Ringsford with Pansy. There had been a thaw during the night, and the meadows and the ploughed lands were transformed into sheets of dirty gray, dirty blue, and reddish slush, according to the character of the soil, dotted with patches of snow like the ghosts of islets in a lake of puddle. But the red sun had a frosty veil on his face; by-and-by this puddle would be glazed with ice, and the heavy drops of melting snow which were falling slowly from the trees would become glittering crystal pendants to their branches.

The two girls, their cheeks tingling with the bite of the east wind, tramped bravely through the slush, with no greater sense of inconvenience than was caused by the fact that they would be obliged to perform the journey by the road instead of taking the short-cut through the Forest.

They spoke little, for each was occupied with her own troublous thoughts; Pansy did not know much of the sources of her friend's anxieties, and Madge had already exhausted the consolation she could offer to her companion. On arriving at Ringsford they found Sam Culver attending to his plants and greenhouses as methodically as if the mansion stood as sound as ever it had done and the daily supply of fruit and flowers would be required as usual.

Madge left Pansy with her father, and went on to the cottage. In the kitchen she found Miss Hadleigh fast asleep in the gardener's big armchair. She would have left the room without disturbing her, but at that moment Miss Hadleigh yawned and awakened.

'Don't go away; I am not sleeping.—Oh, it's you, Madge. Isn't this a dreadful state of things? I haven't had a wink of sleep for two nights, and feel as if I should drop on the floor in hysterics or go off into a fever.'

Miss Hadleigh had been relieved by a good many 'winks' during the period specified, although, like many other nurses, she was convinced that she had not closed her eyes all the time. Madge accepted the assertion literally, and was instantly all eagerness to relieve her.

'You must get away to Willowmere at once, and take a proper rest. You are not to refuse, for I will take your place here and do whatever may be required. You are looking so ill, Beatrice, that I am sure Philip and—somebody else would consider me an unfeeling creature if I allowed you to stay any longer.'

'But it is my duty to stay, dear,' said Miss Hadleigh a little faintly, for she did not like to hear that she was looking ill.

'And it is my duty to relieve you. Besides, Dr Joy has given us some hope that it may be safe to remove your father to our house to-day; and then you will be there, refreshed and ready to receive him.'

'I suppose you are right—I am not fit for much at present,' said Miss Hadleigh languidly; 'and you can do everything for him a great deal better than I can. But I must wait till Philip comes—he promised to be here early.'

'You have heard from him, then?'

'Heard from him!—he was here last night as soon as he could get away from that nasty business he has been swindled into by our nice Uncle Shield. He ought to have taken poor papa's advice at the beginning, and have had nothing to do with him.'

This was uttered so spitefully, that it seemed as if there were an undercurrent of satisfaction in the young lady's mind at finding that the rich uncle who would only acknowledge one member of the family, had turned out a deceiver.

Madge was astonished and chagrined by the information that Philip had been out on the previous evening and had made no sign to her; but in the prospect of seeing him soon, she put the chagrin aside, remembering how harassed he was at this juncture in his affairs. There should be no silly lovers' quarrel between them, if she could help it. She would take the plain, commonplace view of the position, and make every allowance for any eccentricity he might display. She would help him in spite of himself, by showing that no alteration of circumstances could alter her love, and that she was ready to wait for him all her life if she could not serve him in any other way. To be sure, he had said the engagement was at an end; and Uncle Dick had not yet said that it was to stand good. But she loved Philip: her life was his, and misfortune ought to draw them nearer to one another than all the glories of success—than all the riches in the world.

When he came, there was no sign of astonishment at her presence in the temporary refuge of his father: he seemed to accept it as a matter of course that she should be there. Neither was there any sign that he remembered the manner in which they had last parted. To her anxious eyes he seemed to have grown suddenly very old. The frank joyous voice was hushed into a low grave whisper; the cheeks and eyes were sunken; and there was in his manner a cold self-possession that chilled her. Yet something in the touch of his hand reassured her: love was still in his heart, although the careless youth, full of bright dreams and fancies, was changed into the man, who, through loss and suffering, had come to realise the stern realities of life.

They were for a time prevented from speaking

together in private because the doctors had arrived only a few minutes before Philip, and he waited to hear their report. Dr Joy came out of the invalid's room with an expression which was serious but confident.

'Our patient goes on admirably,' he said. 'You need have no fear of any immediate danger; and in six months there will be only a few scars to show the danger he has passed through. I am to stay here for a couple of hours, and then I shall know whether or not we can move him to Willowmere. By that time, too, I expect the ambulance we wrote for last night will be here.—And you, Miss Hadleigh, you really must take rest. I insist upon it. You will not make your father better by making yourself ill. Go and get to bed. Philip and Miss Heathcote will do everything that is necessary, and I shall be their overseer.'

Philip went to the stables to tell Toomey to bring the carriage round for his sister. As he was crossing the little green on his way back to the cottage, Madge met him. Although he had not observed her approaching, his head being bowed and eyes fixed on the ground, he took the outstretched hands without any sign of surprise, without any indication that he understood the cruel significance of the 'good-bye' which had caused them both so much pain. Whatever hesitation she might have felt as to the course she was to pursue was removed by his first words.

'You want to speak to me, Madge,' he said in a tone of gentle gravity; and then with a faint smile: 'I am better than when you saw me last, for I am free from suspense. My position is clear to me now, and I feel that a man is more at ease when the final blow falls and strikes him down, than he can be whilst he is struggling vainly for the goal he has not strength enough to reach. It is a great relief to know that we are beaten and to be able to own it. Then there is a possibility of plodding on to the end without much pain.'

She was as much alarmed by this absolute surrender to adversity as she had been by the strange humour which had prompted him to say that she was free.

'Yes, Philip, I want to speak to you,' she said tenderly, and a spasmodic movement of the hand which grasped hers, signified that the electric current of affection was not yet broken. She went on the more earnestly: 'I am not going to think about the foolish things you have said to me: I am going to ask you to give me your confidence—to tell me everything that has happened during the last two days. Tell it to me, if you like, as to your friend.'

'Always my friend,' he muttered, bending forward as if to kiss her brow, and then drawing slowly back, like one who checks himself in the commission of some error.

'Always your friend,' she echoed with emphasis, 'and therefore you should be able to speak freely.'

'There is not much to tell you. The ruin is more complete than even I imagined it to be, and the fault is mine. Your friend—I ought to say our friend—Mr Beecham has made a generous offer for the business, and, with certain modifications, will allow it to be carried on under my management. This relieves us from immediate

difficulties; and in a short time Mr Shield expects to have recovered sufficiently from his recent losses to be able to assist me in redeeming all that has been lost.'

'What gladder news could there be than this?' she exclaimed with cheeks aglow and brightening eyes; 'and yet you tell it as if it gave you no pleasure. Philip, Philip! this is not like you—it is not right to be so melancholy when the future is so bright.'

'Is it so bright? Are you forgetting how long it must be before I can repay Mr Shield? before'—

He was going to say, 'before I can ask you to risk your future in mine, and what changes may take place meanwhile!'

The earnest tender eyes were fixed upon him, and they were reading his thoughts, whilst she appeared to be waiting for him to complete the interrupted sentence. She saw the colour slowly rising on his brow, and knew that he was feeling ashamed of the doubt implied in his thought.

'I want to tell you something,' she said in her quiet brave way, 'and I hope—no, I *believe* that it will take one disagreeable fancy out of your head. I know that you did not mean what you said to me on that dreadful evening.'

'What else could a ruined man say?' (This huskily and turning his face aside.)

'He could say that he trusted his friends. Even Uncle Dick is angry with you for imagining that your misfortune could make any difference in his feelings towards you. And for me, you *ought* to say . . . but there, I am not going to speak about what you ought to say to me; I am only going to tell you what I shall do.'

He looked quickly at her, and the eager inquiry on his pale face rendered the words 'What is that?' superfluous.

'I shall wait until you come for me; and when you come, I shall be ready to go with you where you will, whether you are poor or rich. No matter what anybody says—no matter what *you* say, I shall wait.'

'O Madge!'

He could say nothing more; the man's soul was in that whisper. Their hands were clasped: they were looking into each other's eyes: the world seemed to sink away from them; and the woman's devotion changed the winter into summer, changed the man's ruin into success.

He drew her arm within his; and they walked past the blackened walls of the Manor, and along the paths where they had spent so many pleasant hours during his recovery from the accident with the horse, to the place where he had thrown off the doctor's control and got out of the wheel-chair.

'I am not so sorry now for what has happened,' were his first words. 'It is worth losing everything to gain so much.'

'But you have not lost everything, Philip.'

'No; I should say that I have won everything. I am glad to have saved Wrentham from penal servitude, for his frauds have enabled me to realise the greatest of all blessings—the knowledge that come what may you can make me happy.'

'And I am happy too,' she said softly, their arms tightening as they walked on again in silence.

By-and-by he lifted his head, and seemed to shake the frost from his hair.

'The doctor said I ought to have rest. I have got it from you, Madge. I can look straight again at the whole botheration—thank you, my darling.' (A gentle pressure on his arm was the answer, and he went on.) 'The arrangement offered by Beecham is a very good and kind one, which will enable me in course of time to clear myself whilst carrying out my scheme; we can take a small house; Mr Shield will live with us, and we must try to make him comfortable. Then we need not wait for the end of next harvest, unless you still insist!—'

'No, Philip; when you bid me come to you, I am ready.'

CIGARS.

It has been abundantly shown by various writers that the Indians of North America as well as elsewhere looked upon tobacco as having a divine origin, as being a peculiar and special gift designed by the 'Good Spirit' for their delectation, and that it held a prominent place in their visions of a future life in the 'happy hunting-grounds.' In the present day, there seems to be an ever increasing dependence on—we might almost say slavery to—the plant, whose soothing influences are called in quest to counteract the effects of this high-pressure age. There are not a few of its devotees who are quite at one with Salvation Yeo in *Westward Ho*, who, when speaking of tobacco, says: 'For when all things were made, none was made better than this; to be a lone man's companion, a bachelor's friend, a hungry man's food, a sad man's cordial, a wakeful man's sleep, and a chilly man's fire. There's no herb like unto it under the canopy of heaven.' We do not, however, propose to discuss the opposing views held by the smoker and the anti-smoker, but intend to restrict ourselves to some remarks on the manufacture of cigars, which have been suggested by a recent visit to the West Indies.

Of the endless varieties of cigars which are met with in various tropical localities, the majority are used for local consumption, and only find their way into England in very small quantities. The bulk of our cigars are either Havana or Manila, European or British, and of these it has been computed that considerably over two hundred million are consumed annually in the United Kingdom. It is evident, therefore, that the manufacture of this luxury is a business of great magnitude, irrespective of the other forms of tobacco used; and if we remember that the duty obtained from tobacco of all kinds puts nearly nine millions per annum into the national exchequer, it becomes possible to realise how much the comfort and happiness of a large number of Her Majesty's subjects depend on the products of the tobacco crop.

An Havana cigar of a good brand is deservedly looked upon as the *crème de la crème* of cigars; but, unfortunately, the number of good makers as well as the possible production of first-class cigars is necessarily limited. Thus the manufacture of the 'Villar y Villar' brand is stated to be never more than twenty-five thousand daily; while that of 'Henry Clays' is fully three times as many. For some time back there has been a deterioration in Havanas, which has

been variously accounted for. It is asserted that, from the exhaustive nature of the crop, guano or other artificial stimulants are largely used, and that the flavour of the leaf has suffered in consequence. Besides, owing to the increasing demand, tobacco has been grown on poor land unsuitable for the production of the finest leaf, and even has been largely imported into Cuba for the manufacture of 'genuine' Havanas. To those, however, who cannot afford to buy the best brands, it is satisfactory to know that a new source of supply is being opened up with great energy. The climate and soil of some parts of Jamaica very closely resemble those of Havana, and are well suited for the growth of the finest leaf. As the Jamaica planters open up their virgin soil, it is safe to predict that with growing experience they will improve in their manufactures, while already they produce a cigar which compares favourably with any but the best of Cuban make.

British cigars, like all other varieties, may be good, bad, or indifferent. By British we mean cigars manufactured in this country from the imported leaf; and as English capital can command the markets, there is no reason why the best tobacco should not be obtainable for importation. Using the same quality of leaf, a cigar can be produced in this country at a much lower cost than if imported ready made. We venture to think, notwithstanding popular prejudice, that a good British cigar is preferable to an inferior foreign make. Pay a fair price, and you will get a good article—home made, in spite of the Spanish labels, which are always used either from affectation or in order to deceive the ignorant. Much is heard about adulteration by means of cabbage-leaves, &c.; but we believe that it is almost unknown in this country. The fact that inferior tobaccos are so very cheap makes fraud both unlikely and unnecessary. Adulteration, however, is not unknown on the continent, where cigars can be obtained six and ten for a penny; but the duty of five shillings per pound is fortunately a bar to their importation into Great Britain. It is needless to say more about continental cigars than we do about all cheap cigars, and that is to recommend smokers to avoid them.

The manufacture of the finished article requires highly skilled labour, and long practice gives the workman an amount of accuracy and dexterity in producing cigar after cigar, alike in shape and size, with a rapidity that is truly wonderful. After the leaves have been properly cured, they are sorted according to size and colour. The centre rib is then extracted, an operation requiring great care. Each workman is seated before a flat board, and is supplied with a bunch of perfect leaves and a pile of broken tobacco. With his fingers, he quickly rolls up some broken pieces, inclosing them in one of the less perfect leaves, forming what is called 'the bunch.' This he proceeds to cover with the wrapper or perfect leaf, which he has already cut with his knife to the required size. The most difficult part of the process has now to be completed, namely, closing in the point. This he does by modelling it with his fingers, quickly twisting the wrapper round it, and fixing the end with a drop of gum. With one sweep of his knife—his only implement—he

trims the broad end, and the cigar is ready to be carried to the drying-room, afterwards to be sorted and packed in boxes.

It is easier to know a good cigar when you smoke one than to describe the points by which a good cigar may be selected. A good cigar, however, should have a good wrapper or exterior; it should have a faint gloss, not amounting to greasiness, due to the essential oil contained in it; and it should have a fine hairy 'down' on its surface. In addition to this, it should be firmly rolled, and yet not be hard, or it will not draw well. When lighted it should burn evenly, and not to one side; it should carry a two-inch ash without endangering your coat, and if laid aside for three or four minutes, should still be alight when taken up again. It is worth remembering the golden rule known to the lovers of the fragrant weed, namely, when holding a lighted cigar, always to keep the burning end turned upwards, so that the smoke may escape into the air—never downwards, as that causes the smoke to pass through the body of the cigar.

In concluding these brief remarks, it may not be amiss to say a word or two about the markings which will be found on the boxes, and about which a good deal of ignorance exists. On most boxes there are four distinct markings, which have each their own significance. First comes the brand proper, which consists either of the maker's name or of some fancy name adopted by the firm; such, for example, as Partagas, Villar y Villar, Intimidads, Henry Clays, &c. The quality of the tobacco is next indicated by Flor Fina, first quality; Flor, second quality, &c. Various names, such as Infantes, Reinas, Imperiales, &c., are used to represent the size or shape of the cigar. The fourth mark gives us an idea of the strength or colour of the tobacco contained in the box; and for this purpose the following terms are used—Claro, Colorado claro, Maduro, &c. To attempt to give any advice to our readers as to the best brands to buy would be beyond the scope of this paper. Experience will soon teach them what to accept and what to avoid; what suits their tastes and their pockets, and what does not.

ONE WOMAN'S HISTORY.

CHAPTER VI.

'PHEW! There's not a breath of air in this valley. One had need be a salamander to appreciate a morning like this. But what a lovely nook it is—ch, Mac? Quite worth coming half-a-dozen miles to see.'

'That it's very pretty, I'll not attempt to deny; but still'—

'By no means equal to what you could show us t' other side of the Border,' said the vicar with a twinkle. 'That's understood, of course.'

The time was the forenoon of the day following the evening on which Madame De Vigne had been so startled by the sudden appearance of one whom she had every reason to believe had died long years before.

The scene was a small but romantic glen. Over the summit of a cliff, at the upper end of a rocky ravine, a stream, which took its rise among

the stern hills that shut in the background, leapt in a cascade of feathery foam. After a fall of some fifteen or twenty feet, it reached a broad, shallow basin, in which it spread itself out, as if to gather breath for its second leap, which, however, was not quite so formidable as its first one. After this, still babbling its own liquid music, it fretted its way among the boulders with which its channel was thickly strewn, and so, after a time, left the valley behind it; and then, less noisily, and lingering lovingly by many a quiet pool, it gradually crept onward to the lake, in the deep bosom of whose dark waters lay the peace for which it seemed to have been craving so long.

A steep and somewhat rugged pathway wound up either side of the glen to the tableland at the summit, overhung with trees and shrubs of various kinds, with a rustic seat planted here and there at some specially romantic point of view. Ferns, mosses, flowers, and grasses innumerable clothed the rocky sides of the ravine down almost to the water's edge. At the foot of the glen the stream was spanned by a quaint old bridge, on which the vicar and Dr M'Murdo were now standing. It was the day of the picnic of which Madame De Vigne had made mention to Colonel Woodruffe, and the party from the *Palatine* had driven over in a couple of wagonettes, which, together with the hampers containing luncheon, were stationed in a shady spot a quarter of a mile lower down the valley.

'Look, Mac, look!' exclaimed the vicar, 'at those two speckled darlings lurking there in the shadow of the bridge. I must come and try my luck here one of these days.'

'You look just a bit feckless this morning without your rod and basket.'

'Where was the use of bringing them? No trout worth calling a trout would rise on a morning like this, when there's not a cloud in the sky as big as one's hand, and not breeze enough to raise a ripple on the water. I've brought my hammer instead, so that I shan't want for amusement. Ah, Mac, what a pity it is that you care nothing either for angling or geology!'

'I could not be fashed, as we used to say in the North. Every man to his likes. I've got a treatise in my pocket on *The Diaphragm and its Functions*, just down from London, with diagrams and plates. Now, if I can only find a shady nook somewhere, I've no doubt that I shall enjoy myself with my book for the next two or three hours quite as much as you with your rod or hammer.'

'So that's your idea of a picnic, is it?' The question came from Miss Gaisford, who had come unperceived upon the two friends as they were leaning over the parapet of the bridge. 'To bury yourself among the trees, eh?' she went on, 'and gloat over some dreadful pictures that nobody but a doctor could look at without shuddering? Allow me to tell you that you will be permitted to do nothing of the kind. You will just put your treatise in your pocket, and try for once to make yourself sociable. Perhaps, if you try very hard, you may even succeed in making yourself agreeable.'

'My poor Mac!' murmured the vicar as he settled his spectacles more firmly on his nose.

The doctor said nothing, but his eyes twinkled, and he pursed up his lips.

'I have arranged my plans for both of you,' said Miss Pen with emphasis.

'For both of us!' they exclaimed simultaneously.

'Yes. Lady Renshaw'—

'O-h!' It was a double groan.

'Don't interrupt. Lady Renshaw will be here presently. As soon as she appears on the scene, you will take charge of her. I have special reasons for asking you to do this, which I cannot now explain. You will amuse her, interest her, keep her out of the way, and prevent her generally from making a nuisance of herself to any one but yourselves, till luncheon-time.'

'My dear Pen,' began the vicar.

'My dear Miss Gaisford,' pleaded the doctor.

'You will do as you are told, and do it without grumbling,' was the little woman's reply as she shook a finger in both their faces. 'I've arranged my plans for the day, and I can't have them interfered with.'

'My dear Pen,' again persisted the vicar, in his mildest tones, 'that your plan is a perfectly admirable one, I do not for one moment doubt, only, as you know very well, I am not and never have been a ladies' man, and that in the company of your charming sex I'm just as shy at fifty-five as I was at eighteen. But with Mac here the case is altogether different. All doctors know how to please and flatter the sex—it's part of their stock-in-trade, so that Mac would be quite at home with her ladyship; whereas I—well, the fact is I had made up my mind to walk as far as'—

'Blackstone Hollow,' interrupted his sister, 'in order that you might have another look at that big trout about which you dream every night, but which you will never succeed in catching as long as you live.'

'The traitor! eh, Miss Penelope?' cried the doctor. 'This is neither more nor less than prevarication—yes, sir, prevarication—there's no other word for it—and you the vicar of a parish, whose example ought to be a shining light to all men! Septimus Gaisford, I'm ashamed of you! As for Lady Renshaw'— He ended with a snap of his fingers.

'Neither of you is afraid of her. Of course not,' remarked Miss Penelope. 'You would scorn to acknowledge that you are afraid of any woman. But why run any risk in the matter? Why allow her ladyship to attack you separately, when, by keeping together and combining your forces, you would render your position impregnable?'

'Impregnable!' both the gentlemen gasped out.

Miss Gaisford's merry laugh ran up the glen. 'What a pair of delicious, elderly nincompoops you are!' she cried. 'Septimus, you dear old simpleton, haven't you discovered that this woman would like nothing better than to bring you to your knees with an offer of marriage?'

'Good gracious, Pen!' cried the vicar with a start that nearly shook the spectacles off his nose.

'Doctor, did you not see enough of her ladyship's tactics last evening to understand that her plan with you is to induce you to believe that she has fallen in love with you? and when one

of your sex gets the idea into his head that one of our sex is in love with him, why, then, a little reciprocity of sentiment is the almost inevitable result.'

'The hussy!' exclaimed Mac. 'I should like her to be laid up for a fortnight and let me have the physicking of her!'

'I noticed that she did press my arm rather more than seemed needful, when we were walking last evening by the lake,' remarked the vicar.

'And I remember now that she squeezed my hand in a way that seemed to me quite unnecessary, when she bade me good-night on the steps of the hotel.'

'Gentlemen, let there be no jealousy between you, I beg,' said Miss Pen with mock-solemnity. 'If you decline to combine your forces, then make up your minds which of you is to have her ladyship, and let the other one go and bewail his sorrows to the moon.'

'By the way, who is Lady Renshaw?' asked the vicar. 'I never had the pleasure of hearing her name till yesterday.'

'Her ladyship is the widow of an alderman and ex-sheriff of London, who was knighted on the occasion of some great event in the City. Her husband, who was much older than herself, left her very well off when he died. That pretty girl, her niece, who travels about with her, has no fortune of her own, and one of her ladyship's chief objects in life would seem to be to find a rich husband for her. At the same time, from what I have already seen of her, it appears to me that Lady Renshaw herself would by no means object to enter the matrimonial state again, could she only find a husband to suit her views.'

'A dangerous woman evidently. We must beware of her, Mac,' said the vicar.

The doctor shook his head. 'My dear friend, your caution doesn't apply to me,' he said. 'Lady Renshaw is just one of those women that I would not think of making my wife, if she was worth her weight in gold.'

They had begun to stroll slowly forward during the last minute or two, and leaving the bridge behind them, were now presently lost to view down one of the many wooded paths which intersected the valley in every direction.

But a few minutes had passed, when Lady Renshaw and Miss Wynter appeared, advancing slowly in the opposite direction. They halted on the bridge as the others had done before them.

'What a sweetly pretty place!' exclaimed Miss Wynter. 'I had no idea it would be half so lovely. I could wander about here for a week, adding under her breath, 'especially if I had Dick to keep me company.'

'Pooh! my dear; you will have had quite enough of it by luncheon-time,' responded her aunt, who had seated herself on the low coping of the bridge with her back to the view up the glen.

'I always thought you were an admirer of pretty scenery, aunt.'

'So I am—when in society. But now that we are alone, there's no need to go into ecstasies about it. On a broiling day like this, I would exchange all the scenery of the Lakes for an easy-chair in the veranda, a nice novel, and

the music of a band in the distance.' Then, as if suddenly remembering something, she gazed around and said: 'By-the-bye, what has become of Mr Golightly?'

'I saw him strolling in this direction a few minutes ago,' was the innocent answer. 'I have no doubt that he is somewhere about.'

'Now that Archie Ridsdale has been called away, you will be able to give him the whole of your attention. There seem plenty of quiet nooks about where you will be able to get him for a time all to yourself. He certainly seems excessively infatuated, considering how short a time he has known you, and I should not be a bit surprised if that waterfall were to lead him on to make violent love to you before you are six hours older.'

'Aunt!'

'Oh, my dear, I've known stranger things than that happen. When a susceptible young man and a pretty girl sit and watch a waterfall together, he is almost sure before long to begin squeezing her hand, and then what follows is simply a question of diplomacy on her part.'

'If—if—in the course of a few days—Mr Golightly were to propose?'

'He may do it this very day for aught one can tell. He seems infatuated enough for any thing. When he does propose, you will accept him—conditionally. You will take care to let him see that you care for him—a little. You have known him for so short a time that really you scarcely know your own feelings—&c., &c. Of course, before finally making up your mind, we must have some more definite information as to the position and prospects of the young man, and what his father the bishop has in view as regards his future. Besides, Mr Archie Ridsdale may possibly be back in the course of a day or two.'

'But in what way can Archie's return affect me?'

'You stupid girl! have I not already told you that Sir William is nearly sure to refuse his consent, and that Archie's engagement with this Miss Loraine may be broken off at any moment. Then will come your opportunity. Archie seemed very fond of you at one time, and there's no reason why he should not become fond of you again. Young men's fancies are as changeable as the wind, as you ought to know quite well by this time.'

Bella only shrugged her shoulders and sauntered slowly over the bridge.

The expression of Lady Renshaw's face changed the moment she found herself alone, and her thoughts reverted to a topic over which they had busied themselves earlier in the day.

'So this high and mighty Madame De Vigne—this person whom nobody seems to know anything about—could not condescend to come in the same wagonette with us poor mortals! She and her sister must follow in a carriage by themselves, forsooth! Last evening, when we got back from the lake, she had retired for the night; this morning, she breakfasted in her own room. I feel more convinced than ever that there's some mystery about her. If I could but find out what it is! Of course, in such a case it would become my duty at once to communicate with Sir William.'

Miss Wynter came back over the bridge, but much more quickly than she had gone. 'Oh, look, aunt!' she exclaimed; 'I declare there's D—I mean Mr Golightly, standing yonder, gazing at the water, and all alone.'

Lady Renshaw took a survey of the young man through her glasses. Feeling safe in his disguise, Richard had now discarded some portions of the clerical-looking costume he had worn yesterday, and was attired this morning more after the style of an ordinary tourist.

'You had better stroll gently along in the same direction,' remarked her ladyship. 'Poor young man, he looks very lonely!'

'But I can't leave you alone, aunt.'

'Never mind about me. Besides, I see that dear vicar and Dr M'Murdo coming this way.'

Lady Renshaw turned to greet Miss Gaisford and the two gentlemen, who were still a little distance off.

'Here they come. To which of my two admirers shall I devote myself to-day?' she simpered. 'Why not endeavour to play one off against the other, and so excite a little jealousy? It is so nice to make the men jealous. Poor dear Sir Timothy never would be jealous; but then he was so very stupid!'

Miss Gaisford was the first to speak. 'We were just wondering what had become of you, Lady Renshaw.'

'I lingered here to drink in this fairy scene. It is indeed too, too exquisitely beautiful.'

'If they would only turn on a little more water at the top of the cliff it would be an improvement,' answered Miss Pen.—'Septimus, you might inquire whether they can't arrange it specially for us to-day.'

'My dear!' protested the vicar with mild-eyed amazement.

'Maybe, like myself,' remarked the doctor, 'your ladyship is a worshipper of beautiful scenery?'

'O yes. I dote on it—I revel in it. After I lost poor dear Sir Timothy, I went to Switzerland, in the hope of being able to distract my mind by travel. Those darling Alps, I shall always feel grateful to them!'

'What did the Alps do for you, Lady Renshaw?' queried Miss Pen with the utmost gravity.

'They gave me back my peace of mind; they poured consolation into my lacerated heart.'

'Very kind of them—very kind indeed,' answered Miss Pen drily.

Lady Renshaw threw a quick, suspicious glance at her. 'What a very strange person!' she murmured. The vicar's sister was a puzzle to her. It could not be that she was covertly making fun of her, Lady Renshaw! No; the idea was too preposterous.

Dr Mac had not gone about for fifty years with his eyes shut. He had discovered that many persons, both male and female, who plume themselves on their knowledge of the world and their shrewdness in dealing with the common affairs of life, are yet as susceptible to flattery, even of the most fulsome kind, and just as liable to be led away by it into the regions of foolishness, as their far less sophisticated fellow-mortals. What if this woman, with all her worldly-mindedness and calculating selfishness, were one of those individuals who may be dexterously led

by the nose and persuaded to dance to any tune so long as their ears are judiciously tickled? A peculiar gleam came into the doctor's eyes as these thoughts passed through his mind. He cleared his voice and turned to her ladyship.

'It appears to me, Lady Renshaw,' he began, 'speaking from a professional point of view, that you are gifted with one of those highly-strung, super-sensitive, and poetical organisations which render those who possess them peculiarly susceptible to all beautiful influences whether of nature or of art. Hem.'

'How thoroughly you understand me, Dr M'Murdo!' responded her ladyship, beaming on him with one of her broadest smiles.

The vicar took off his spectacles and proceeded to rub them vigorously with his handkerchief. 'Mac, you are nothing better than a barefaced humbug,' he whispered to himself.

'It would seem only natural, my dear madam,' resumed the unblushing doctor, 'that a temperament such as yours, which throbs responsive to beauty in all its thousand varied forms as readily as an Æolian harp responds to the faintest sigh of the summer breeze, should—should find an outlet for itself in one form or other. Have you never, may I ask, attempted to pour out your thick crowding fancies in verse? Have you never, while gazing on some such scene as this, felt as if you could float away on—the wings of Poesy? Have you never, in brief, felt as if you could only find relief by rushing into song? Hem.'

The poor vicar fairly gasped for breath.

'Yes, yes; that is exactly how I have felt a thousand times,' gushed her ladyship. 'At such moments I seem to exhale poetry.'

'Dear me! rather a remarkable phenomenon,' murmured Miss Pen.

'I long to be a dryad—or a nymph—or one of Dian's huntresses in some Arcadian grove of old.'

'A nymph! Hum,' remarked the vicar softly to himself.

'But I have never yet ventured to—to—'

'Gush into song,' suggested Miss Pen.

'To attempt to clothe my thoughts in rhythmic measures,' went on her ladyship with a little wave of the hand, as though deprecating interruption, 'although I have often felt an inward voice which impelled me to do so.'

'Let me advise you to try, my dear madam,' resumed the doctor with his gravest professional air. 'If I may be allowed to say so, you have the eye of a poet—dreamy, imaginative, with a sort of far-away gaze in it, as though you were looking at something a long way off which nobody but yourself could see.'

'Ought I to listen to these things in silence?' asked the vicar of himself with a sudden qualm of conscience.

'You are a great, naughty flatterer, Dr M'Murdo,' said the widow, shaking a podgy finger archly at him.

'Madam, that is one of the points on which my education has been shamefully neglected.'

She turned with a smile. 'I trust that our dear vicar is also a worshipper of the beautiful?'

'With Lady Renshaw before my eyes, it would be rank heresy to doubt it,' stammered the dear old boy with a blush that would have become a lad of eighteen.

'Pass up one, Septimus,' whispered his sister in his ear.

'If you talk to me in that strain, I shall begin to think you a very, very dangerous man,' whispered her ladyship.

'There's a charming view of the lake from an opening in the trees a little farther on,' remarked Dr Mac. 'Would not your ladyship like to walk as far?'

'By all means, though I am loath to tear myself from this exquisite spot.'

'We shall find our way back to it later on.'

'With your permission, I will leave you good people for a little while,' remarked Miss Pen. 'I've other fish to fry.'

Her ladyship stared. 'What an excessively vulgar remark!' was her unspoken thought.

Miss Gaisford turned to her. 'Lady Renshaw, I must intrust these two young sparks into your hands for a time.'

'You could not leave us in more charming captivity,' remarked the gallant doctor.

The vicar, as he fingered the hammer in his pocket, looked imploringly at his sister, but she pretended not to see.

'Au revoir, then, dear Miss Gaisford,' said her ladyship in her most affable tones.

'Au revoir, au revoir.'

As the three went sauntering away, the vicar lagging a little behind the others, Miss Pen heard the doctor say: 'You know the song, Lady Renshaw, *When I view those Scenes so charming*,' after which nothing but a murmur reached her ears.

She turned away with a little laugh. 'The doctor will fool her to the top of her bent. Who would have thought that high-dried piece of buckram had so much quiet fun in him?—And now to look after my hampers. If I trust to the servants, by luncheon-time the ice, like Niobe, will have wept itself away, the corkscrew will have taken a ramble on its own account, the vinegar and salt will have gone into house-keeping together, and the mustard will be making love to the blanc-mange. My reputation is at stake.'

AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS ON THEMSELVES.

It has been fairly proved in previous numbers of this *Journal* that so long as advertising continues, a newspaper can rarely be altogether dull, for the curiosities of the advertisement columns often exhibit strange freaks and fancies of human nature, which may afford amusement when the news columns are at their grimmest and dreariest. But the place of all others which may be regarded as the headquarters of the advertising genius is the land across the Atlantic, and the papers which are the medium of the greatest enterprise in this line are the *Tribunes* and *Suns* of the United States; and most entertaining of all are the announcements by which the American journals draw attention to their own brilliant pages. An English newspaper directory is not very attractive, except to the business portion of the community; but an American publication of the kind is of a much more amusing character; and in two bulky and comprehensive volumes, an indomitable transatlantic publisher has issued a universal gazetteer, wherein

the newspapers of every part of the globe may be studied.

In the first place, it is enough for an English paper, as a rule, to state the town and county it represents; but young America must do more than this, if readers outside her various regions are to estimate the value of her press. Jacksonville or Euteroga must be set forth as indisputably the most thriving city in the richest district of the most prosperous State. Magnolia, advertisers are 'notified,' is a 'flourishing town with more than twenty-five business-houses;' Augusta 'is growing and has a bright future;' Westfield is 'a thriving town of above a thousand inhabitants,' clearly affording scope for a large circulation.

Manchester (United States), we learn, in a sentence racy of the soil, 'is a large, live, and growing city, makes one hundred and seventy-nine miles of cloth per day, can build fifteen locomotives a month, and fifty steam fire-engines a year, and an endless variety of other products of skill and industry.' Another rising spot has 'fourteen grocery, three hardware, and five dry goods stores, four tailor-shops, six butcher-shops, two banks, four hotels, three grist-mills, two stove-factories, foundry, planing-mills, &c., and six churches, one of which cost about sixteen thousand dollars, and has a spire one hundred and forty-eight feet high.' But this edifice is outdone in a third town which 'points with just pride to its magnificent iron bridge, costing over forty thousand dollars, and other evidences of public enterprise.' Middle Loup Valley is, we are told, 'one of the largest and most productive valleys in the State, which is from its picturesque scenery and fertility of soil poetically called the "Rhine of America." Another touch of poetry is come across unexpectedly: 'A belt of fire from thousands of coke ovens surrounds Mount Pleasant, the centre of the great Connells-ville Coke County, and the place where the *Times* and *Mining Journal* is published;' and there is a rhythmical swing about the remark that the *Honey Grove Independent* 'is published in the land where cotton grows rank and tall, and where cattle grow fat in the wild prairies.' But Honey Grove with its cattle is nothing to Hancock County, where 'the people have become so corpulent, that the druggists are all becoming independently rich from the sale of Allen's Anti-Fat;' and the Blue Grass Valley of Kentucky 'is famous all over the world for its handsome women, thoroughbred horses, rich soil, and fine climate.'

To be worthy of a land like this, the newspapers also possess rare attractions for readers and advertisers, the latter especially. They are 'alive and growing' 'newsy! pithy! spicy!' one is a 'paper for all mankind,' another 'overflows with local gossip,' and a third 'discusses public questions with lively respectability, and feeds its readers with no less than four and often five columns of spicy local matter each week;' a fourth has 'everything first-class;' you can get 'a bright and newsy wide-awake local paper,' or 'a live thirty-two column weekly;' and the *Eaton Rapids Journal* will be found, appropriately to its name, 'a live paper in a live town.' Yet more richly descriptive is the account of the 'red-hot local paper that feeds twenty thousand people

every week and makes them fat; advertisements can reach millions of hungry minds through this medium.' Again, we learn that 'Life on the ocean wave is nothing compared with reading the *Plymouth Pantograph*.' The *Sacramento Bee* is 'the spiciest, ablest, most brilliant, and most independent journal published on the Pacific coast'; while for 'talking large,' honourable mention should also be accorded to one of Cincinnati's lights, which is 'the best paper ever published. All its news is first-hand from upwards of fifteen hundred reporters and correspondents in every part of the United States and Europe.'

But these are mere outward characteristics and generalisations. Politics denote more distinctly the paper's line of action, whether 'stalwart Republican,' 'sound Democratic,' or 'Independent in all things, neutral in nothing.' Independence is the cry of many; they are 'bold and fearless,' express a hatred of party, rings and ringsters. 'Now in its third volume,' exults one banner of freedom, 'and has never halted by the way nor wearied of the fight. Always ready to take up the cause of the poor and oppressed, and never ready to surrender its independence to party, clique, or ring.' 'Has no axe to grind other than the advancement of every social reform,' a second patriot proclaims. 'Therefore it hits a head whenever that head is seen in opposition to true advancement.' For the extremes of party violence we must go to a Southern journal, which does not, it may well be hoped, 'speak as the masses of our people feel and talk;' if it does, so much the worse for the people. 'If the Yankees,' this rodomontade begins, 'want to know the real sentiments of our people; if they want to have a realising sense of the utter madness of trying to govern the grand old sovereign States of the Confederacy, they will close their ears to the lying professions of our policy-bumming politicians and subscribe to the *Bartlett News*.' Perhaps some such rant as that of the *Bartlett News* a certain *Labor Standard* had in view while stating itself to be 'not a blowing, blustering, black-mail sheet which has to be read in private because its contents are unfit to be seen in the family,' but 'a clean live weekly paper, devoted entirely to the interests of the working-classes.'

A Texan organ 'will seek to be a photograph of all the resources and needs of Texas; a mirror of her markets; a barometer of pure principles, sound public faith, and private honour. Democratic, but conservative, independent and outspoken in the exalted interests of just criticism—no panderer to partisan men or measures, whether right or wrong!' This is independence with a vengeance, ahead even of the gazette which 'favours immigration, morality, and the Christian religion; and unflinchingly opposes shams, rings, rogues, and enemies to the people. It exposes villainy and crime wherever found, and hence is read by the more intelligent classes of people in the field where it circulates.'

The conjunction of immigration and the Christian religion reminds one of the much bemoaned lady who 'painted in water-colours and of such is the kingdom of heaven.' But there is a still more frank linking together of things temporal and spiritual in the 'only Democratic out-and-out

paper in Western Iowa,' which sails under the motto, more Yankee than reverent, 'Fear God, tell the truth, and make money;' the editor further announcing that if he 'is allowed to live under a Republican administration another year, he will carry your advertising at five cents per line, fifty dollars per column, or furnish his paper for one dollar fifty cents per year.'

The *Horseheads Journal and Chemung Co. Greenback* 'exposes rascality everywhere, and aims to give something to interest and instruct everybody every week,' from which it may be surmised that the *Horseheads Journal and Chemung Co. Greenback* is happier in its object than in its title. Many of these 'wide-awake and spicy' representatives of Western culture are not remarkable for the elegance of their names, the admixture of Indian and American resulting in some curious compounds, such as the *Petrolea Topic*, the *Klickitat Sentinel*, the *Katahdin Kalendar*, the *Wazahachie Enterprise*, and the *Coshooton Age*. Yankee, pure and simple, reigns in the *Weekly Blade*, *Jacksonian*, *Biggsville Clipper*, *People's Telephone*, and *New Haven Palladium*; but there is a charm of euphony about the *Xenia Sunlight* and *Golden Globe*, and the brevity which may be the soul of wit in the *Call*, *Item*, *Plaindealer*, and *Editor's Eye*.

The editors, as is well known, come much more to the front than is the case in England; they do not remain the invisible and mysterious 'we' of the editorial sanctum; their names are frequently advertised with those of the publishers, occasionally, indeed, accompanied by a portrait or other additional recommendation; one paper 'is edited by two of the ablest newspaper men in the State, and it will be hard to find a better team in the editorial harness.' 'The most important feature,' we learn, 'of the *Free Press* is its funny squibs by the editor, "Driftings from Dreamland," which are original and spicy; and as appropriately named, surely, is "a humorous department, "Tea and Toast," to be found in another print. A Texas editor offers "upon justifiable encouragement to visit any county or city in Texas or Mexico and make a statistical "write-up" of their every interest and advantage," indicative of lively and reliable information for intending immigrants; and a *Highland Recorder*, with an affection for the Land o' Cakes one can but sympathise with, says that 'every page breathes of Clan-Alpine freshness.'

Great stress is laid upon the home-printing of the small journals—'no patent outside or inside; 'almost every sentence is of home manufacture, little clipping is done; 'the only paper that does all its work at home,' &c. A further noticeable feature is the frequent use of certificates and testimonials as to circulation from public and private individuals or from contemporary prints, or of self-recommendations such as that of the paper which 'has a very fine list of country subscribers,' or of the journal 'published by a genuine Jayhawker,' which 'goes to every post-office in the northern part of the State.'

It is when we come to the direct announcements to advertisers, however, that we get perhaps the queerest hints from our American cousins. 'Advertising rates cheerfully furnished' appears frequently; 'Advertisers love it' is a short and sweet statement regarding one paper; 'Should be

patronised by every live advertiser; 'Advertisers, do you want some return for your money? Read our inducements,' say others. Then, 'The modesty of the publishers deters them from mentioning the peculiar merits of the *Courier* as an advertising medium'—a modesty rivalled by the remark, 'Rates of advertising so low that we are almost ashamed to announce them,' which differs from the standpoint of a third, 'Advertising rates held high enough to make a living for the publisher;' and the latter appears upon the whole to be the more general sentiment, as may be testified by 'Don't send offers under price,' 'We only advertise for money.' The last sentence alludes to a species of exchange evidently less popular among the publishers than with their clients. 'No advertising solicited,' says the *Westfield Pantograph*, 'except for cash, or what may be as good. No space to give away or let at half-price.' More decisive is the *Cathoun Pilot*, which 'is choice in the admission of advertisements in its columns, and those it does admit, "due bills" of no character will settle for them. Must be in hard cash quarterly in advance, unless good references are given. Save your paper and postage, ye advertisers who have nothing to offer us for our space than your wares and due bills. We don't want 'em. We have a good article to retail, and nothing but the almighty dollar will buy it. But,' adds the *Pilot* more amiably, 'while this is strictly our rule, our rates are low, and we give value received for all the lucre you place in our possession.' Still more downright is the declaration, 'No three-cornered patent pills, second-hand clothing, skunk-hunting machines, or hand-organs taken in payment for advertising.' 'The *News* publishes no dead ads., and gives no puffs; 'No half-cash advertisements accepted, no swindling or bogus patrons wanted.' 'Dead-beat, swindling advertisers,' sarcastically announces the *Troy Free Press*, 'can have their matter chucked carefully into the stove by sending them to our office. Our space is for sale, and must be paid for at living rates.' But there is encouragement for honest advertisers given by a *Clipper-Herald* through whose columns announcements 'go to that class of people who are honest and intelligent and who pay for what they get;' and in an equally straightforward assertion elsewhere, the *mens conscia recti* of the editor rises superior to grammar into the realms of wit: 'Has a good circulation among a prompt-paying class of people—these be facts!'

Facts or not, there is a distinctive character about Jonathan's advertisements equal to some of the fiction with which he has supplied us.

THE MISSING CLUE.

CHAPTER III.—THE EVENTS OF A NIGHT.

DOWN-STAIRS in the public room, the faithful Derrick is engaged in a seemingly interesting conversation with mine host Hobb Dipping and two or three other jolly good fellows, who are all drinking at his expense. No sign yet had the attendant discovered that had served to arouse his suspicions. No word had been spoken which in any way showed that the natives of this desolate place were anxious to know more about his master or himself. A suspicion of danger often arouses our fears and doubts

when there is perhaps the smallest occasion for either. The honest countrymen troubled themselves much less about the matter than even the worthy host, who was happily indifferent to everything but the fact that Mr Morton and his servant were rare and profitable customers. The lumbering knot of labourers at length departs, and mine host locks and bars the door; while Derrick, not a little fatigued with the harassing events of the day, is left standing alone, surveying a row of empty benches which the retiring fennmen have just quitted. Burly Hobb comes back puffing and blowing, his red face glowing like the setting sun, and his bald skull spotted with perspiration through the exertion he has undergone in securing the strongly built outer door.

'Landlord, I'm going to bed,' says Derrick, who has suddenly returned to his original gruffness.

'Very good, sir,' is the reply of the host, who forthwith trims and lights an atom of a lamp which he fishes out of a cupboard by the fireplace. 'I hope you will sleep well, sir.'

Derrick's eyes are watching the innkeeper from under his beetling brows, and he answers gruffly: 'I hope so.'

'I've heard it said,' goes on the loquacious host, 'that a good sleep is worth a fortune to an over-tired man. I see nothing to prevent you sleeping well here, sir.'

'Not much likelihood of being roused in the night, eh?' remarks the attendant.

'Why, no, sir,' answers Dipping, wondering what motive his guest could have in asking such a question. 'There's no one to disturb you here, unless, indeed, it be your master himself.'

'Many visitors here?' inquired Derrick, as old Hobb leads the way up the dusky, creaking staircase with the flickering lamp in his hand.

'None at all, sir,' replied the landlord in a melancholy tone. 'There never is any one here—leastways, very, very seldom. I haven't had a visitor stopping in this house for a matter of—I can't rightly say how long; but I know it's a mortal long while, for since my poor wife died'—

'Is this my room?' interrupts Derrick, as the innkeeper halts before a solid-looking black door at the head of the staircase.

'It is,' answers old Dipping. 'You are pretty close to your master, sir.'

'I know,' is all that the attendant deigns to say, as he pushes open the door and enters with the light, leaving the landlord to stumble down-stairs in the dark as best he may. Having carefully fastened the door, Derrick sets down the light, and approaches the window with the intention of getting a breath of fresh air. The casement is somewhat hard to unfasten, and when at length he succeeds in opening it, the lamp which he has brought is blown out under the sudden influence of a gust of air which is admitted. No matter; he does not want it. The night-breeze is cool and refreshing, a favourable contrast to the hot stifling room below, and Derrick, as he leans upon the window-ledge, begins to appear more contented and at ease. All afterglow of the twilight has long disappeared, and the moon is shining with a sickly light upon a low layer of mist which

covers the marshy flats. Above the thin watery fog which has arisen from the sluggish stream and enshrouded the village as in a winding-sheet, the great shattered tower of the monastery rises ghostlike and dim, while the silence of the vast solitude is unbroken by a single sound. Even Derrick is not insensible to the peculiar beauty and stillness of the scene, and he lounges there, humming a tune, and watching the silvery trickle upon the watery marsh long after mine host has retired to rest. At length he closes the casement and divests himself of his heavy boots. Tired as he is, he does not attempt to remove his clothes. The man had seen a deal of sharp service, and experience had taught him long ago that in cases where he might be wanted at any moment, it were better to sleep in them. He merely places his pistols within reach, and then throwing himself upon the bed, endeavours to sleep.

Every one knows what it is to arrive at that dreamy state of semi-unconsciousness when the weary senses, failing at once to engage the attentions of the drowsy god, find a sort of relief in a long train of most disconnected thought. It was thus with Derrick. The fatigues of the day had proved too much for even that hardy individual, so that, instead of falling at once into a sound refreshing sleep, he was drowsily conning over the different events which had occurred, his rambling imagination colouring them with a variety of indistinct pictures and incidents. These weird fancies at length grew fainter and fainter, and the attendant was fast sinking into slumber, when suddenly, and as it seemed without a cause, he awoke. Through the casement the moon was staring down upon him like a pale still face, and the greater part of his recumbent person lay bathed in its cold light. All was still; there seemed not the slightest reason why he should be thus aroused. The silence was profound, and the very beating of Derrick's heart sounded like a hammer thumping time in his head. Scarcely knowing what he does, he sits up on the edge of his bed and listens. Yes; he was not mistaken, there seemed to be a faint noise approaching the old inn—a low measured tramp. The hammer-like beating grows louder as Derrick, with every nerve strained to the utmost pitch, silently rises and once more opens the casement. There can be no mistake now; some persons are approaching; and in that low tramp, distant as it is, he recognises the marching of a body of soldiers. He closes the window softly, and taking his heavy riding-boots in his hand, unfastens the door, and glides softly along the gallery towards his master's apartment. Owing to the pitchy darkness in which the gallery is enveloped, he experiences some difficulty in groping his way without stumbling; but reaching the further end at last, he feels his way to his master's door and gives the required signal. It is answered with unexpected suddenness, the door being instantly thrown open, and Sir Carnaby appearing on the threshold. He is fully dressed, like Derrick; he has not even removed his outer clothing, and in his hand is a short broad-bladed knife. The saddle-bags lie upon the table, and a portion of their contents, discernible by a dim night-light, is scattered about; but the black box is gone.

In a very few words, the trusty henchman explains what is the reason of his coming, and urges his master to hold himself in readiness to escape, should it be necessary. Sir Carnaby looks at him while he speaks as if he does not quite understand his hurried explanation; but when the attendant has finished, he looks around the room with an anxious air, and then says: 'If it be so, Derrick, we must get off somehow as quickly as we can. This win'low, I think, looks towards the back of the house. Can you not manage to descend into the courtyard and get out our horses? Lead them down the bank of the stream towards that tall beacon by the dike. You must remember the place; we remarked it as we passed the mill on our journey here.'

'I remember the place, Sir Carnaby; but I am not going to make off there, and leave you alone here.'

'I shall be safe enough, I tell you, Derrick,' said the baronet as he hastily motioned to the attendant to go. 'I cannot come yet; I cannot; it is impossible.'

'I will wait below, then,' is the stubborn reply of his servant, who is already half out of the window.

'Derrick,' says Sir Carnaby, laying his hand upon the attendant's shoulder, 'do what I tell you. I cannot come now; and if you wait below for me, as you say, we shall both be discovered. More lives than our own depend upon your obeying me at this moment. Go, as I tell you, and wait for me by the beacon; and I will join you as soon as I possibly can.'

The man clasps his master's hand, and, with something like tears in his eyes, makes his way to the ground. The fugitive baronet has no emotion expressed on his countenance, for he fears not for himself; his thoughts are centred upon that black box which has now so strangely disappeared. With the broad-bladed knife still in his hand, he goes towards a corner of the room, kneels down, and appears to busy himself with the planking of the floor.

Fortunately for himself, Derrick had found his way to the shed where the horses had been stabled; and his efforts to saddle and bring them out had proved successful. The great gates leading out of the courtyard of the old inn were fastened; but this did not deter the attendant's movements for an instant. Leading the horses through a gap in the fence at the back of the *Saxonford Arms*, he crossed a small cultivated inclosure, and emerged from the cover of a hedge upon the open highway. Stopping for a moment to listen, he plainly distinguished the measured tramp of soldiers approaching the inn, mingled with the low peculiar clank of arms and accoutrements. One circumstance which particularly alarmed Derrick was that the sound plainly came from the direction in which he had to go. There was no time for thought, however; the warning tramp which broke the stillness of the night came nearer and nearer, and over the old timber bridge which crossed the stream came a dim file of figures—eleven of them. Derrick could easily count the number as they passed over the bridge and came straight towards the old *Saxonford*

Arms, their fixed bayonets flashing and glittering in the moonlight.

There was but one course he could take; he must move forward and pass them. No opportunity for making a detour, for the military were not one hundred yards from the house, and the attendant knew that he had been seen. Muttering a prayer for his master's safety, Derrick put the horses to a slow trot, and advanced towards the soldiers with a feeling of fear at his heart which he had never before experienced. He had not covered half the distance before a sharp word of command came from the front, and a line was drawn up across the road, evidently with the intention of disputing his further progress. A dash for it now; delay meant capture both for himself and his master. Digging spurs into his horse's sides, the attendant laid the flat of his broad blade over the flanks of Sir Carnaby's charger which he led, and tore down the road like a whirlwind. It was all over in a minute. A sheet of flame shot forth as the bold horseman broke through the line, and then, without a check, he found himself ascending the steep bank close against the bridge. The soldiers, however, who had taken the initiative, had no intention of letting their suspected quarry escape. Before Sir Carnaby's servant could head the bank, he was surrounded, and a hoarse cry to stop and surrender came from his pursuers. In this they had mistaken their man. Derrick entertained no such idea. He indeed hoped that the firing would alarm his master, and allow him time to make his retreat in safety; but not a thought had he of yielding. Once more clapping spurs to his horse, and striking right and left with his drawn blade, the attendant partially succeeded in clearing himself from the press.

At this moment, a random shot from one of the military dropped his master's horse, which he had been leading. Derrick had scarcely time to disengage his arm from the bridle before the poor animal went crashing down, breaking the worm-eaten railing of the bridge like matchwood, and throwing one of his assailants headlong into the stream below. In the confusion, Derrick received a bayonet-wound in the left arm, and he was nearly pulled from his saddle; but shaking himself free with almost superhuman strength, he applied his spurs, and galloped across the old bridge for dear life.

Although there appeared to be no attempt at pursuit, Derrick did not judge it prudent to ride straight for the spot where he hoped to meet his master. After making a considerable circuit, the trusty henchman, faithful to the last, reined in his reeking steed, and gazed across the flat misty space in the direction of the *Saxonford Arms*. The silence, however, was as complete as when he had sat at that open window looking over the fen. Not a soul was anywhere near him. Putting his horse once more in motion, the man rode slowly along the bank until he reached the place of rendezvous. It was as he both feared and suspected. Sir Carnaby was not there. He must wait. The clear night clouded, and the hours passed by, but yet his master came not. Derrick might wait until the crack of doom, but he never would meet his master again on earth. The devoted courage

of the servant was useless now, for, pierced by a musket bullet, Sir Carnaby Vincent lay lifeless across the stairs of the old *Saxonford Arms*.

CHAPTER IV.—AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS.

It wanted but a few days to Christmas 1760—a seasonable Christmas, and in keeping with that festive season of the year. Snow and sharp north-east winds had been plentiful for nearly a week past. The flat country all around the time-honoured cathedral city of Eridswold had been covered with a vast sheet of drifted snow, which had found its way into every nook and crevice, filling up all the ditches and dikes until they were level with the surrounding country. The minster tower was embellished with an innumerable number of white patches, and the minster roofs were hidden under a thick covering of frozen snow. It was evident that King Christmas had things to his liking this time, and was bent upon enjoying his own particular time in his own particular way. Meanwhile the wind roared on, roared and whistled, and whisked the sharp frozen snowflakes round and round, dashing them, as if in impotent rage, against the sturdy walls of the minster. The air was so thick that, although the hour was not late, darkness had set in with a density that obscured every object from view, while the tolling of the great vespers-bell was drowned by the distracting uproar of the elements.

It was during one of the uncertain lulls which occurred from time to time, that a figure emerged from the protecting shelter of one of the cathedral buttresses, and wrapping himself in the folds of a horseman's cloak, strode hastily forward, evidently intending to take advantage of the brief calm and reach some haven of shelter. Scarcely a single person was to be seen in the deserted streets, through which the blast tore with such mad fury that the buffeted wayfarer staggered again. Visions of glowing fires, dry clothes, and comfortable shelter rose before his imagination as he passed a brightly lighted window. But there was no stopping for him; he must on and fight this tough battle with the pitiless wind as best he may. His destination is at length reached. The weather-beaten traveller descends a couple of steps, passes through an open doorway, and emerges from the outer darkness into a warm, cosy-looking bar—his clothes half-frozen, and crusted with patches of snow. He is apparently known here, for he is instantly relieved of his cloak and hat by a neat-looking damsel, who up to the present moment has been engaged in a light and refreshing flirtation with a large, hot-visaged man lounging before the fire.

'Sharp weather this, sir,' remarked that worthy, slightly moving from his place.

'Sharp indeed!' returned the other in a deep voice, as he shook some loose particles of snow from his person.

'Ah, this'll be a bad time for many people,' was the next remark the large man ventured upon.

A muttered exclamation dropped from the lips of the last comer, but was too indistinct to be heard.

'There'll be many a person remember this night,' continued he of the fiery countenance, with an insane notion that he was getting along capitably.

The individual addressed turned sharply round, fixing a pair of dark eyes upon the other's face, but he did not speak.

Somewhat discouraged, the large man paused for a minute ere he spoke again. The person he seemed so wishful to converse with was a tall, handsome, young fellow, dressed in a sort of half-military costume, and with a bold dashing look, sufficient in itself to attract notice. By his side was a silver-hilted rapier, the ordinary weapon of a gentleman of the day; and the martial look of the wearer was sufficient proof that he would be prompt to use it in any emergency. Seemingly not satisfied with the long inspection he had thought fit to take, our red-faced friend once more endeavoured to enter into conversation; but the gentleman, after giving the maid some orders, quitted the room.

'Is that gentleman staying in the house, Peggy, my dear?' asked the red-faced one of the waiting-maid.

'Yes; he came here last night,' replied the girl, who was perfectly ready to resume the afore-said flirtation, which had been interrupted by the entrance of the visitor.

But the man with the fiery face now seemed to be persistently interested in the stranger. 'What may his name be, Peg?' he asked in a tone of affected carelessness.

'That's no business of yours, Mr Goff,' retorted the damsel a trifle tartly, for the swain's indifference somewhat nettled her.

'Now, Peggy, my chuck, don't get crusty,' said the big man in wheedling accents. 'What's that you've got in your pretty hand?'

'It's the gentleman's hat,' replied the fair maid, somewhat relaxing. 'I'm going to dry it by the fire with his cloak. They're sopping wet, now the snow's melted on them.'

'He's not likely to lose his headpiece, whoever he may be,' remarked Mr Goff. 'I can see "R. Ainslie" on the lining quite plain, as you're holding it now.'

'You seem to take a deal of interest in the gentleman,' laughed Peggy as she turned the hat away.

'It's mighty little interest I take in any one except you, my beauty,' returned Mr Goff. 'I only thought the young fellow looked wonderful weary and tired like.'

'He looked that yesterday,' said Peggy, warming to the subject. 'I felt quite sorry for him when he rode up. It wasn't fit weather to turn a dog out in.'

'And he's been out again to-day?' hazarded the big man.

'Yes,' replied Peggy, depositing the hat and cloak in front of the roaring blaze. 'He went out early on foot, leaving his horse in the stable, and we saw nothing more of him till two o'clock. He came back then, and ordered something to eat; but, as I'm a living creature, I think he scarcely touched it. After that, he went out again, and did not return till just now.'

'It seems wonderful curious,' said Mr Goff slowly, as he buttoned up his coat and prepared to go—'seems wonderful curious that a young

gent should go on in that fashion. When I see 'em a-doing so, I always have a sort of notion that they've got something on their minds, and are going to act rash.'

'That's your experience, is it?' said the girl with a laugh. 'I don't think much of it.'

'Possibly not,' returned the other. 'Good-night.'

A SOLITARY ISLAND.

THE government of Iceland have commissioned Mr Thoroddsen to undertake systematic explorations of that island, with a view to investigating its physical features and describing its natural history. While on a visit to Grimsey, a small island twenty-two miles due north of Iceland, he found it inhabited by eighty-eight human beings, debarred from all communication with the mainland, excepting once or twice every year, when, at great risk, the natives contrived to visit the mainland in their small open boats.

After describing the flora and meteorology of this secluded islet, Mr Thoroddsen informs us that the 'pastor of the island, M. Pjetur Gudmundsson, has for many years been engaged in exceedingly careful meteorological observations on behalf of the Meteorological Institute of Copenhagen. This most worthy gentleman, living here in conspicuous poverty, like a hermit divorced from the world, though he has the comfort of a good wife to be thankful for, is not only regarded as a father by his primitive congregation, but enjoys, moreover, the reputation of being in the front rank among sacred poets in modern Iceland.

'The inhabitants derive their livelihood for the most part from bird-catching, nest-robbing, and deep-sea fisheries. The precipices that form the eastern face of the island are crowded with myriads of various kinds of sea-fowl. On every ledge the birds are seen thickly packed together; the rocks are white with guano, or green-tufted with scurvy-grass; here everything is in ceaseless movement, stir, and flutter, accompanied by a myriad-voiced concert from screamers on the wing, from chatters on domestic affairs in the rock-ledges, and from brawlers at the parliament of love out at sea, the surface of which beneath the rocks is literally thatched at this time of the year with the wooing multitudes of this happy commonwealth. If the peace is broken by a stone rolled over the precipice or by the report of a gunshot, the air is suddenly darkened by the rising clouds of the disturbed birds, which, viewed from the rocks, resemble what might be taken for gigantic swarms of bees or midges.

'The method adopted for collecting eggs is the following: Provided with a strong rope, some nine or ten stalwart men go to the precipice, where it is some three hundred feet high, and one of the number volunteers or is singled out by the rest for the perilous *sig*, that is, "sink" or "drop," over the edge of the rocks. Round his thighs and waist, thickly padded generally with bags stuffed with feathers or hay, the *sigamadr*, "sinkman" or "dropman," adjusts the rope in such a manner that he may hang, when dropped, in a sitting posture. He is also dressed in a wide smock or sack of coarse calico, open at the breast, and tied round the waist with a belt,

into the ample folds of which he slips the eggs he gathers, the capacity of the smock affording accommodation to from one hundred to one hundred and fifty eggs at a time. In one hand the sinkman holds a pole, sixteen feet long, with a ladle tied to one end, and by this means scoops the eggs out of nests which are beyond the reach of his own hands. When the purpose of this "breath-fetching" sink is accomplished, on a given sign the dropman is hauled up again by his comrades. This, as may readily be imagined, is a most dangerous undertaking, and many a life has been lost over it in Grimsey from accidents occurring to the rope.

'For the pursuit of the fishery, the island possesses fourteen small open boats, in which the men will venture out as far as four to six miles cod-fishing; but this is a most hazardous industry, owing both to the sudden manner in which the sea will rise, sometimes even a long time in advance of travelling storms, and to the difficulty of effecting a landing on the harbourless island.

'Now and then the monotony of the life of the inhabitants is broken by visits from foreigners, mostly Icelandic shark-fishers, or English or French fishermen.

'Of domestic animals the islanders now possess only a few sheep. Formerly there were five cows in the island; but the hard winter of 1860 necessitated their extermination, and since that time, for twenty-four years, the people have had to do without a cow! Of horses there are only two at present (1884) in the island! Strange to say, the health of the people seems on the whole to bear a fair comparison with more favoured localities. Scurvy, which formerly was very prevalent, has now almost disappeared, as has also a disease peculiar to children, which, in the form of spasm or convulsive fit, used to be very fatal to infant life in former years.

'Inexpressibly solitary must be the life of these people in winter, shut out from all communication with the outer world, and having in view, as far as the eye can reach, nothing but arctic ice. The existence of generation after generation here seems to be spent in one continuous and unavailing arctic expedition. The only diversion afforded by nature consists in the shifting colours of the flickering aurora borealis, in the twinkling of the stars in the heavens, and the fantastic forms of wandering icebergs. No wonder that such surroundings should serve to produce a quiet, serious, devout, and down-hearted race, in which respect the Grimsey men may perhaps be said to constitute a typical group among their compatriots. However, to dispel the heavy tedium of the long winter days, they seek their amusements in the reading of the Sagas, in chess-playing, and in such mild dissipations at mutual entertainments at Christmas-time as their splendid poverty will allow.'

FORESTRY AND FARMING.

At one of the evening lectures in connection with the late Edinburgh Forestry Exhibition, Mr J. Meldrum spoke of the 'Johore Forests' which are situated in the Malayan Peninsula between the British settlements of Singapore and Malacca. The greater part of the interior, he said, consisted

of a virgin forest, and abounded in timber trees of a large size, no fewer than three hundred and fifty specimens of which were to be seen in the Forestry Exhibition. About three hundred kinds awaited the advent of the papermaker, who would be able to convert them into useful wood-pulp at a very low cost. Railways were required to make this wealth of timber available for commercial purposes.

Another lecture by Mr Cracknell at the model of the Manitoba Farm embodied some interesting information regarding the Canadian north-west. The Bell Farm in Qu'appelle he described as the largest farm in the world. There were eight thousand acres under crop, five thousand under wheat, and a portion of the remainder under flax. From this farm, ten thousand bushels of wheat had been exported at a good price last year; and this year's crop was estimated to be forty per cent. better. The estimated wheat acreage this year in Manitoba is three hundred and fifty thousand; and in the north-west territories sixty-five thousand, with an estimated yield of twenty-three bushels an acre. There was thus a total of four hundred and fifteen thousand acres, and nine million five hundred and forty-five thousand bushels; but deducting two million seven hundred and sixty thousand bushels for home consumption and seed, there remained a surplus of six million seven hundred and eighty-five thousand bushels. There is little consolation here for the British farmer, who finds wheat-growing at the present low prices positively unremunerative.

A LOVE-THOUGHT.

If thou wert only, love, a tiny flower,
And I a butterfly with gaudy wings,
Flitting to changing scenes each changing hour,
Careless of aught save that which pleasure
brings—

Not even I could leave the lowliest glade
That held thy loveliness within its shade.

If thou wert but a streamlet in the vale,
And I a sailor on a stormy sea,
Flying through whirling foam beneath the gale,
Chartless in all that wild immensity—
Thy murmuring voice would echo in my soul
Through howling storm or crashing thunder-roll.

If, darling, thou wert but a far-off star,
And I a weary wanderer o'er the plain,
Unwitting of celestial worlds afar,
And knowing naught of all the shining train—
My glance would single out thy ray serene,
Though blazing suns and planets rolled between.

Yet, dear one, thou art these to me, and more :
My flower, whose radiance passeth all decay ;
My streamlet of sweet thoughts in endless store ;
My star, to guide my steps to perfect day ;
My hope in earth's dark dungeon of despair ;
My refuge 'mid life's weary noonday glare.

H. ERNEST NICHOL.

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